

Message for U.S. Citizens

As of April 4, the Chinese authorities confirmed 14 cases of a new strain of avian influenza (H7N9) in Shanghai, Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Anhui. A small number of new cases have been reported each day since Sunday, March 31 when three cases were initially reported by the Chinese authorities. Thus far, no human-to-human transmission has been reported and no link has been found between the laboratory-confirmed cases. Individuals in close contact with the infected were tested and the results have all been negative.

The Chinese authorities are actively monitoring and investigating this situation and has heightened disease surveillance. At this point the risk for international disease spread is considered low. The latest advisory from the World Health Organization as of April 4 is that no travel or trade restrictions with China should be applied based on the current information.

How can I protect myself and my family?

Cover the nose and mouth while sneezing or coughing.

Wash your hands frequently, especially before and after preparing foods and before eating.

Thoroughly cook all poultry and poultry products, including eggs.

Avoid contact with sick animals and do not go to live animal markets or farms.

What are the signs and symptoms?

The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by the flu virus. Flu is different from the cold and the symptoms come on suddenly. Symptoms of fever, cough, sore throat, fatigue, headache, body aches are some of the symptoms associated with the flu.

What should I do if I have the flu?

Most individuals who get the flu will recover within a few days but some people can develop complications. Individuals with certain lung problems such as asthma or COPD, those with diabetes, heart disease and those over the age of 65 are at a greater risk of developing complications.

If you do get the flu:

Stay hydrated. If you get sick with flu symptoms and are at high risk of flu complications or you are concerned about your illness, call your health care provider for advice. You should stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other things you have to do and no one else can do for you. You should stay home from work, school, travel, shopping, social events, and public gatherings.

Where can I find more information?

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is following this situation closely and coordinating with domestic and international partners in a number of areas, including gathering more information to make a knowledgeable public health risk assessment and developing a candidate vaccine virus. All of these actions are routine

preparedness measures taken whenever a new novel influenza virus is detected in humans.

CDC will provide updated information as it becomes available.

<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/avianflu/h7n9-virus.htm>

The Chinese Center for Disease Control and Prevention also provides regular updates on the ongoing developments. You can view the information at <http://www.chinacdc.cn> and <http://www.chinacdc.cn/en/>.

We strongly recommend that U.S. citizens traveling to or residing in China enroll in the Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) at <https://step.state.gov/step>. STEP enrollment gives you the latest security updates, and makes it easier for the U.S. Embassy or nearest U.S. Consulate to contact you in an emergency. If you don't have Internet access, enroll directly with the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate.

Regularly monitor the State Department's website at <http://travel.state.gov>, where you can find current Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts, and the Worldwide Caution. Read the Country Specific Information for China at http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis/cis_1089.html. For additional information, refer to "A Safe Trip Abroad" on the State Department's website.

Contact the U.S. Embassy or Consulate for up-to-date information on travel restrictions. You can also call 1-888-407-4747 toll-free from within the United States and Canada, or 1-202-501-4444 from other countries. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays). Follow us on Twitter at <https://mobile.twitter.com/travelgov> and Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/travelgov>, and download our free Smart Traveler iPhone App at <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/smart-traveler/id442693988?mt=8> to have travel information at your fingertips.

The American Citizen Services unit of the U.S. Consulate General in Shanghai is located at 1038 West Nanjing Road, 8th Floor, Shanghai 200041. For the American Citizen Services operation hours, please refer to our website: <http://shanghai.usembassy-china.org.cn/service.html>. If you are a U.S. citizen in need of urgent assistance, the emergency number for the U.S. Consulate General in Shanghai is (86) (21) 3217-4650.